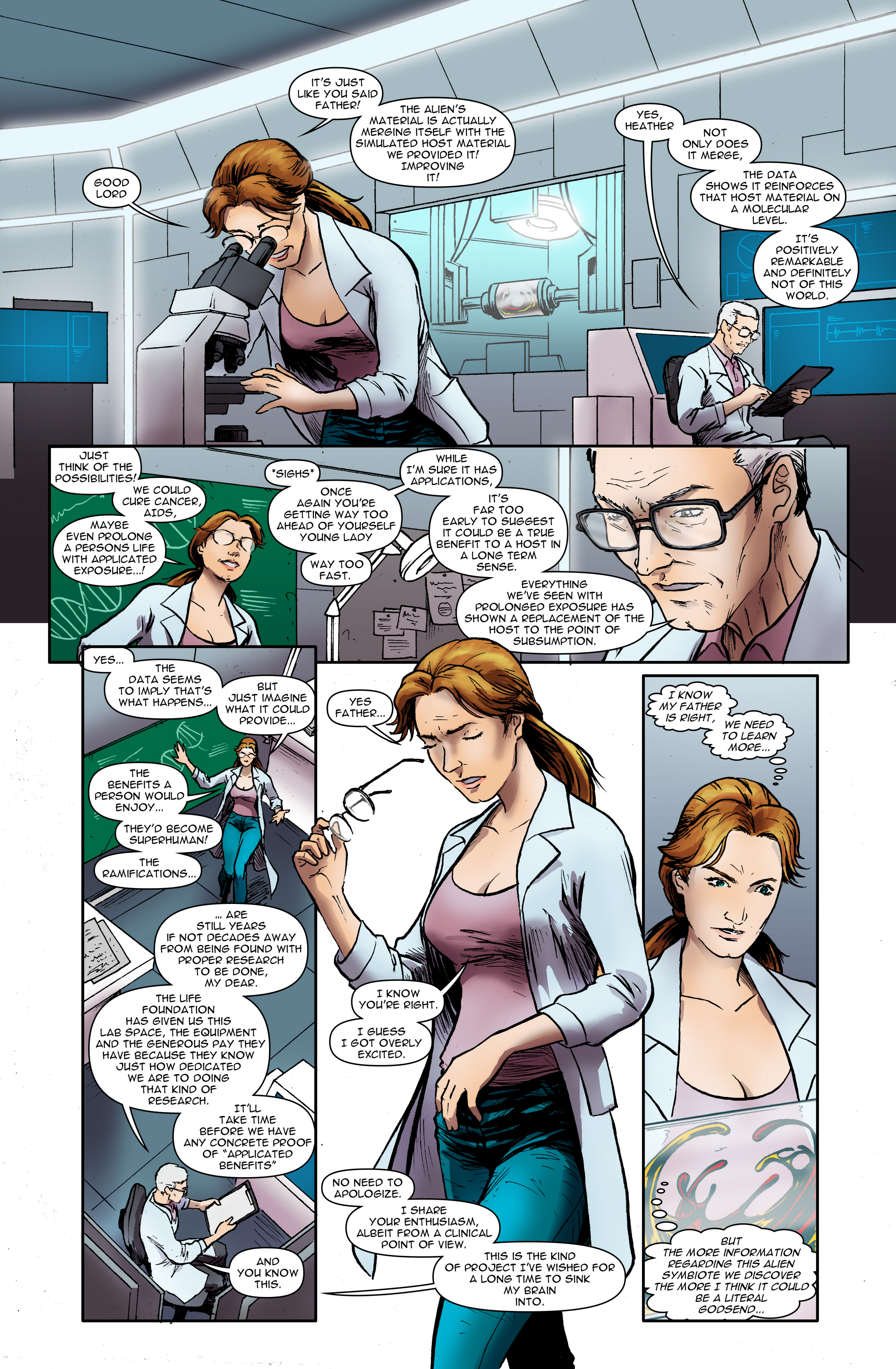
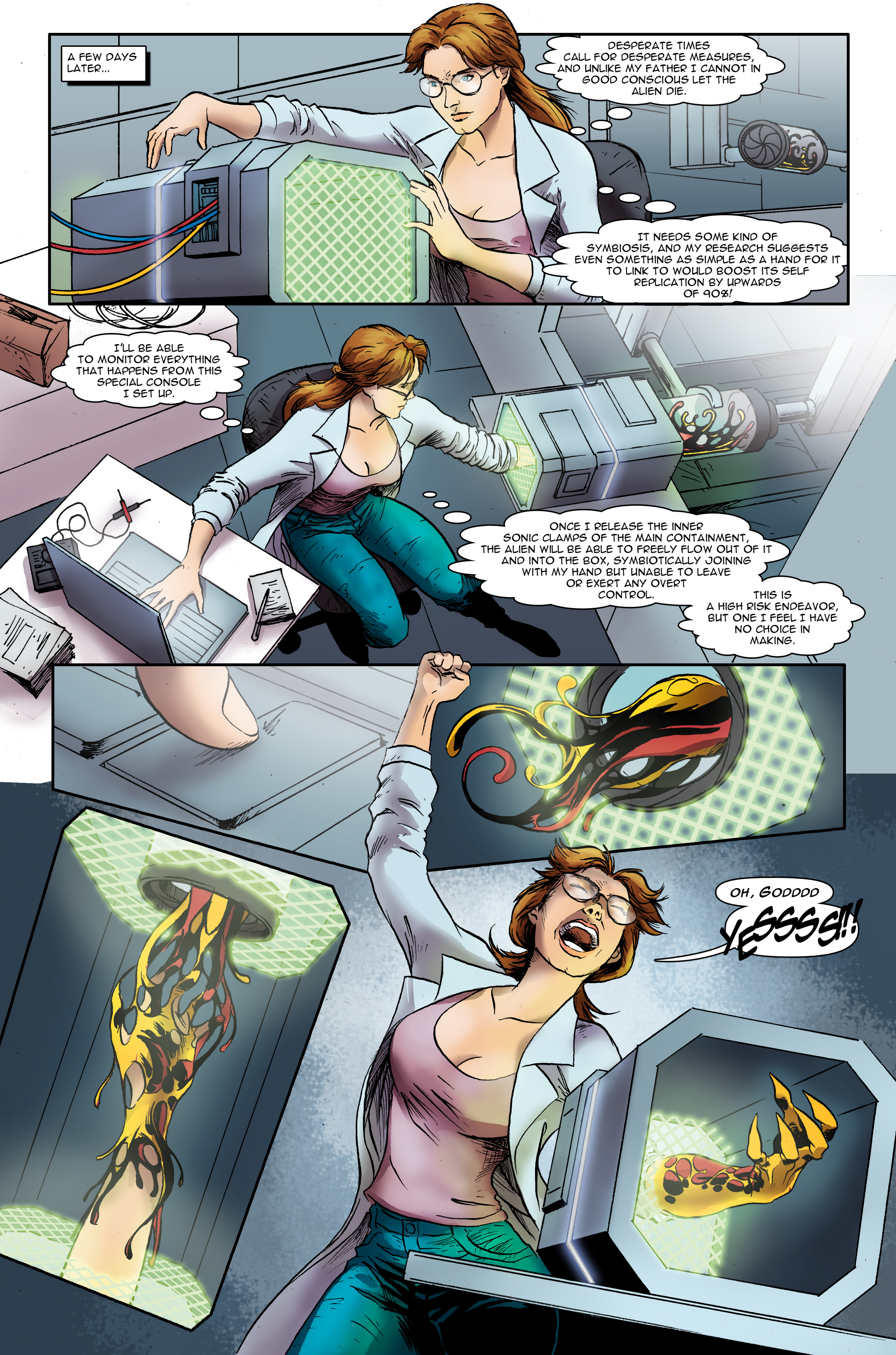
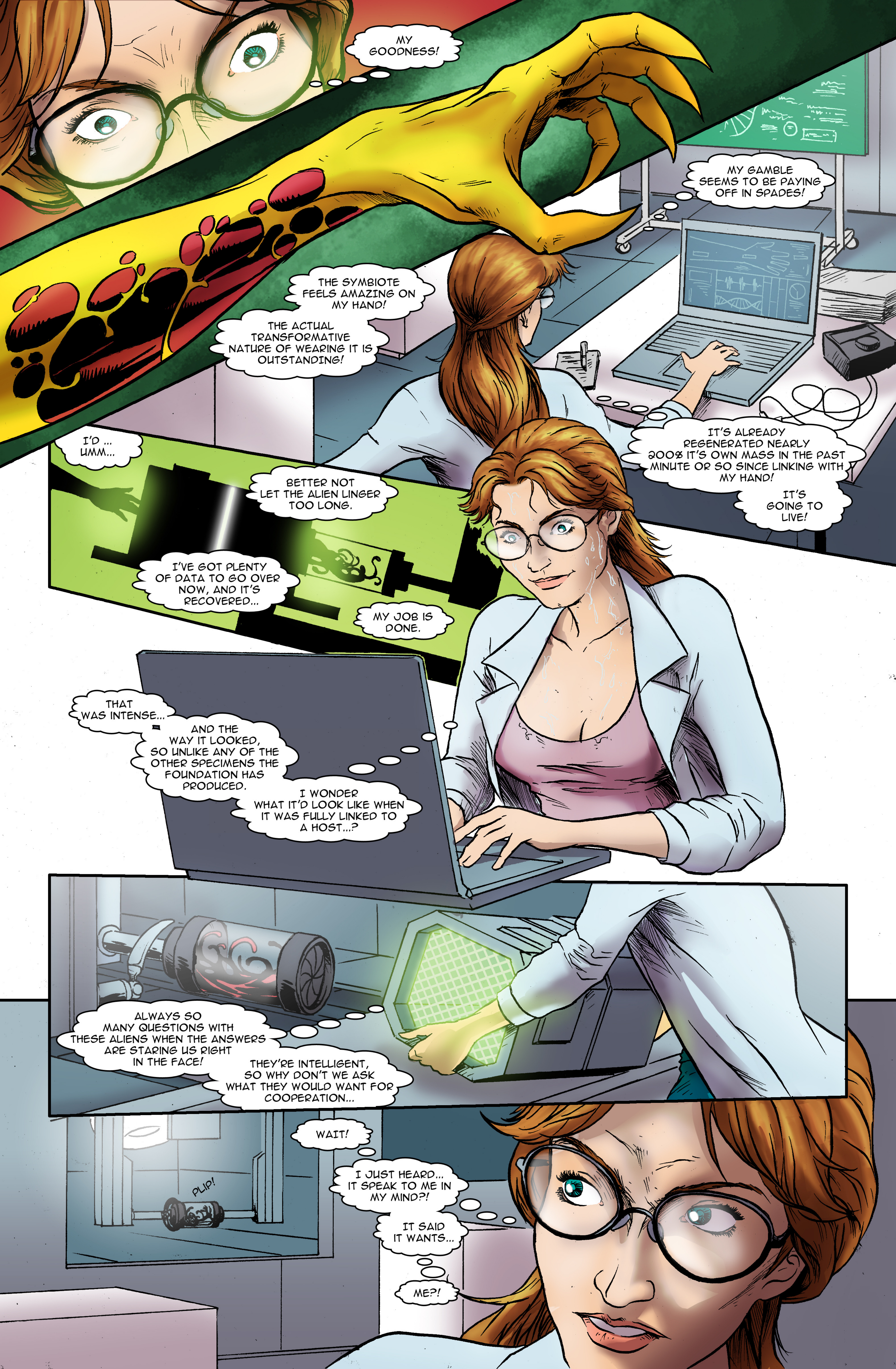
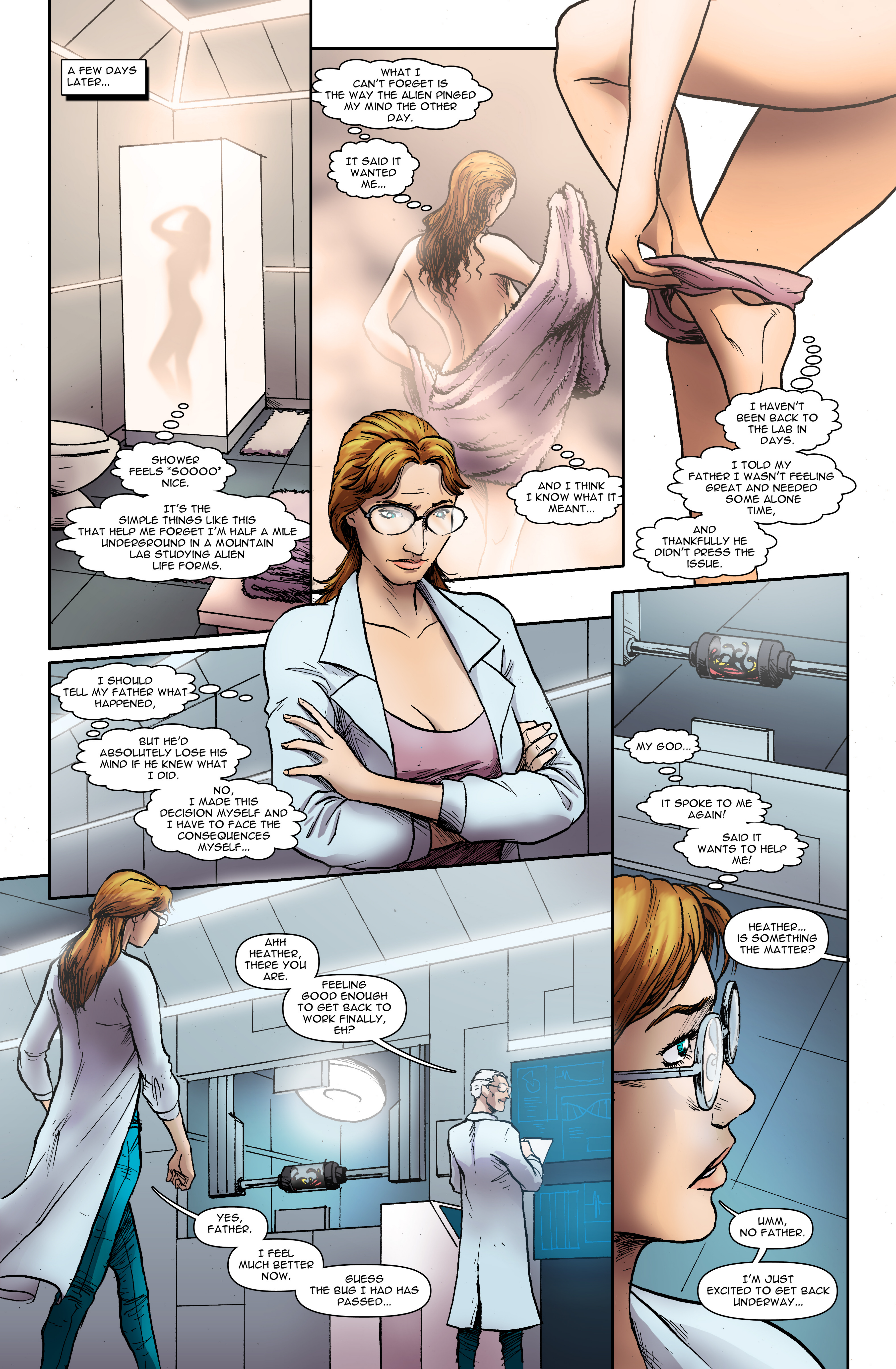
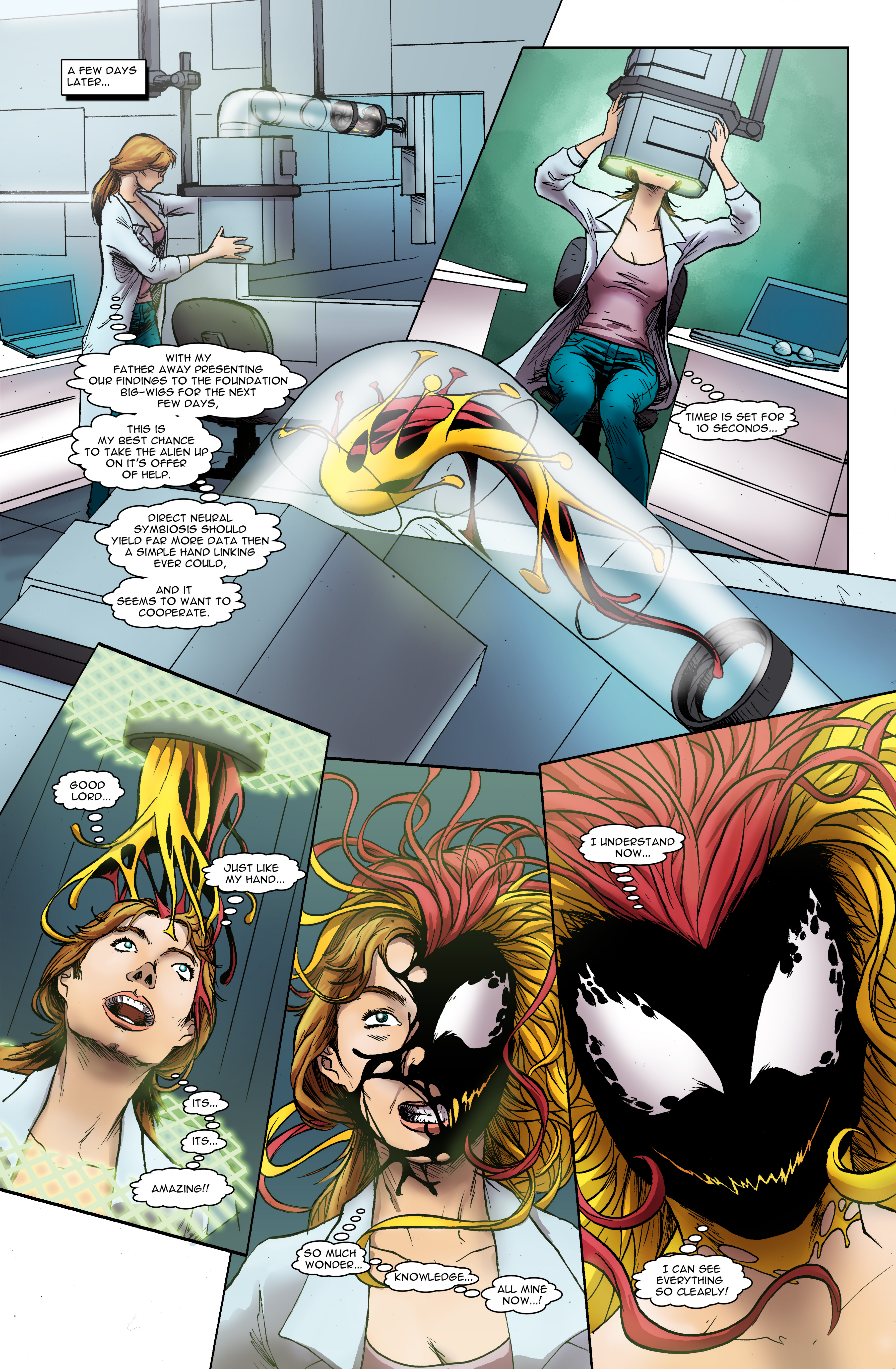
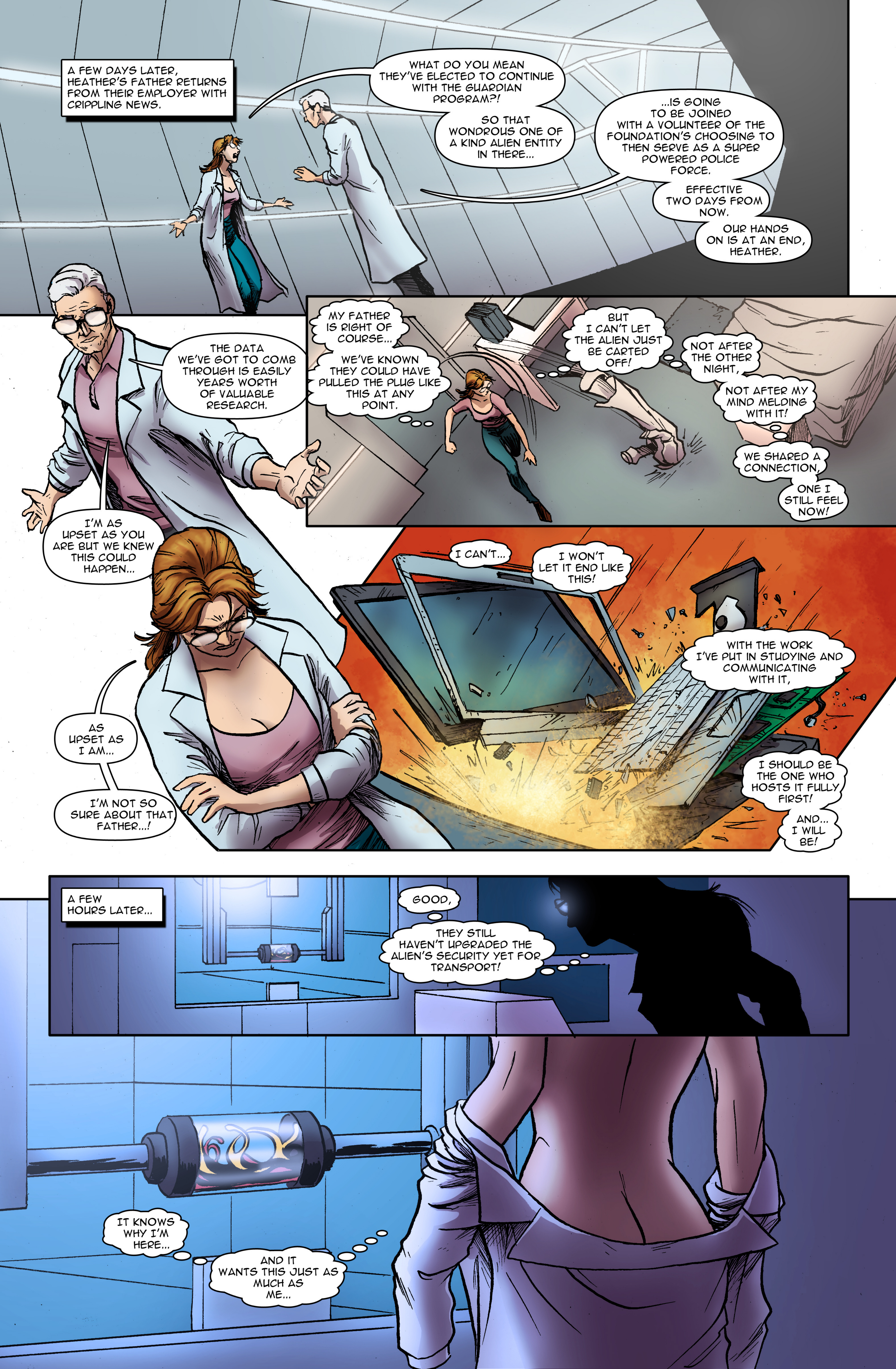

IT'S JUST LIKE YOU SAID FATHER!
THE ALIEN'S MATERIAL IS ACTUALLY MERGING ITSELF WITH THE SIMULATED HOST MATERIAL WE PROVIDED IT! IMPROVING IT!
GOOD LORD
YES, HEATHER
NOT ONLY DOES IT MERGE,
THE DATA SHOWS IT REINFORCES THAT HOST MATERIAL ON A MOLECULAR LEVEL.
IT'S POSITIVELY REMARKABLE AND DEFINITELY NOT OF THIS WORLD.
JUST THINK OF THE POSSIBILITIES!
WE COULD CURE CANCER, AIDS,
MAYBE EVEN PROLONG A PERSONS LIFE WITH APPLICATED EXPOSURE...!
SIGHS
ONCE AGAIN YOU'RE GETTING WAY TOO AHEAD OF YOURSELF YOUNG LADY
WAY TOO FAST.
WHILE I'M SURE IT HAS APPLICATIONS,
IT'S FAR TOO EARLY TO SUGGEST IT COULD BE A TRUE BENEFIT TO A HOST IN A LONG TERM SENSE.
EVERYTHING WE'VE SEEN WITH PROLONGED EXPOSURE HAS SHOWN A REPLACEMENT OF THE HOST TO THE POINT OF SUBSUMPTION.
YES...
THE DATA SEEMS TO IMPLY THAT'S WHAT HAPPENS...
BUT JUST IMAGINE WHAT IT COULD PROVIDE...
THE BENEFITS A PERSON WOULD ENJOY...
THEY'D BECOME SUPERHUMAN!
THE RAMIFICATIONS...
... ARE STILL YEARS IF NOT DECADES AWAY FROM BEING FOUND WITH PROPER RESEARCH TO BE DONE, MY DEAR.
THE LIFE FOUNDATION HAS GIVEN US THIS LAB SPACE, THE EQUIPMENT AND THE GENEROUS PAY THEY HAVE BECAUSE THEY KNOW JUST HOW DEDICATED WE ARE TO DOING THAT KIND OF RESEARCH.
IT'LL TAKE TIME BEFORE WE HAVE ANY CONCRETE PROOF OF "APPLICATED BENEFITS"
AND YOU KNOW THIS.
YES FATHER...
I KNOW YOU'RE RIGHT.
I GUESS I GOT OVERLY EXCITED.
NO NEED TO APOLOGIZE.
I SHARE YOUR ENTHUSIASM, ALBEIT FROM A CLINICAL POINT OF VIEW.
THIS IS THE KIND OF PROJECT I'VE WISHED FOR A LONG TIME TO SINK MY BRAIN INTO.
I KNOW MY FATHER IS RIGHT,
WE NEED TO LEARN MORE...
BUT THE MORE INFORMATION REGARDING THIS ALIEN SYMBIOTE WE DISCOVER THE MORE I THINK IT COULD BE A LITERAL GODSEND...

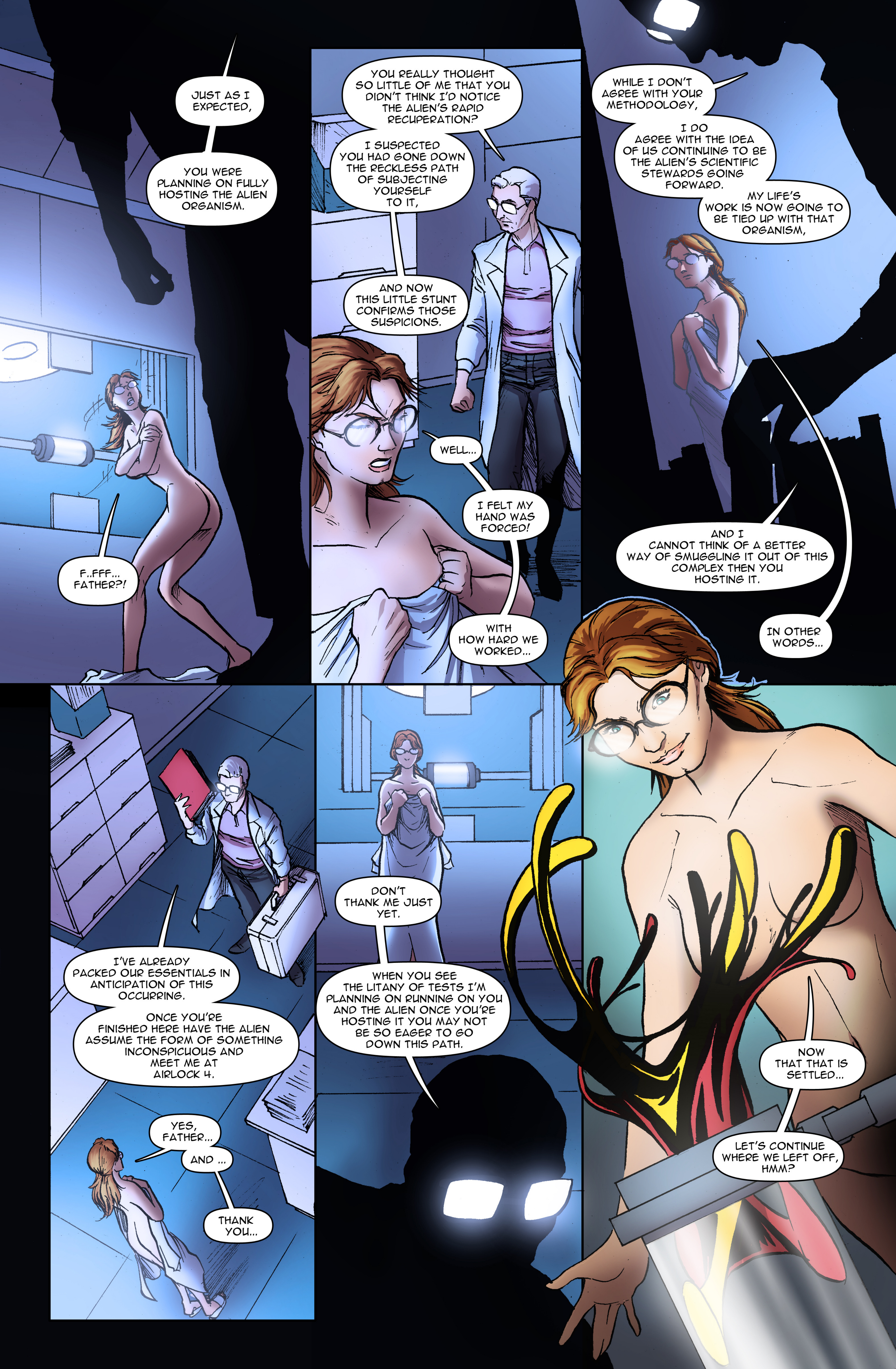

A FEW DAYS LATER...
DESPERATE TIMES CALL FOR DESPERATE MEASURES, AND UNLIKE MY FATHER I CANNOT IN GOOD CONSCIOUS LET THE ALIEN DIE.
IT NEEDS SOME KIND OF SYMBIOSIS, AND MY RESEARCH SUGGESTS EVEN SOMETHING AS SIMPLE AS A HAND FOR IT TO LINK TO WOULD BOOST ITS SELF REPLICATION BY UPWARDS OF 90%!
I'LL BE ABLE TO MONITOR EVERYTHING THAT HAPPENS FROM THIS SPECIAL CONSOLE I SET UP.
ONCE I RELEASE THE INNER SONIC CLAMPS OF THE MAIN CONTAINMENT, THE ALIEN WILL BE ABLE TO FREELY FLOW OUT OF IT AND INTO THE BOX, SYMBIOTICALLY JOINING WITH MY HAND BUT UNABLE TO LEAVE OR EXERT ANY OVERT CONTROL.
THIS IS A HIGH RISK ENDEAVOR, BUT ONE I FEEL I HAVE NO CHOICE IN MAKING.
OH, GODDDD YESSSS!!

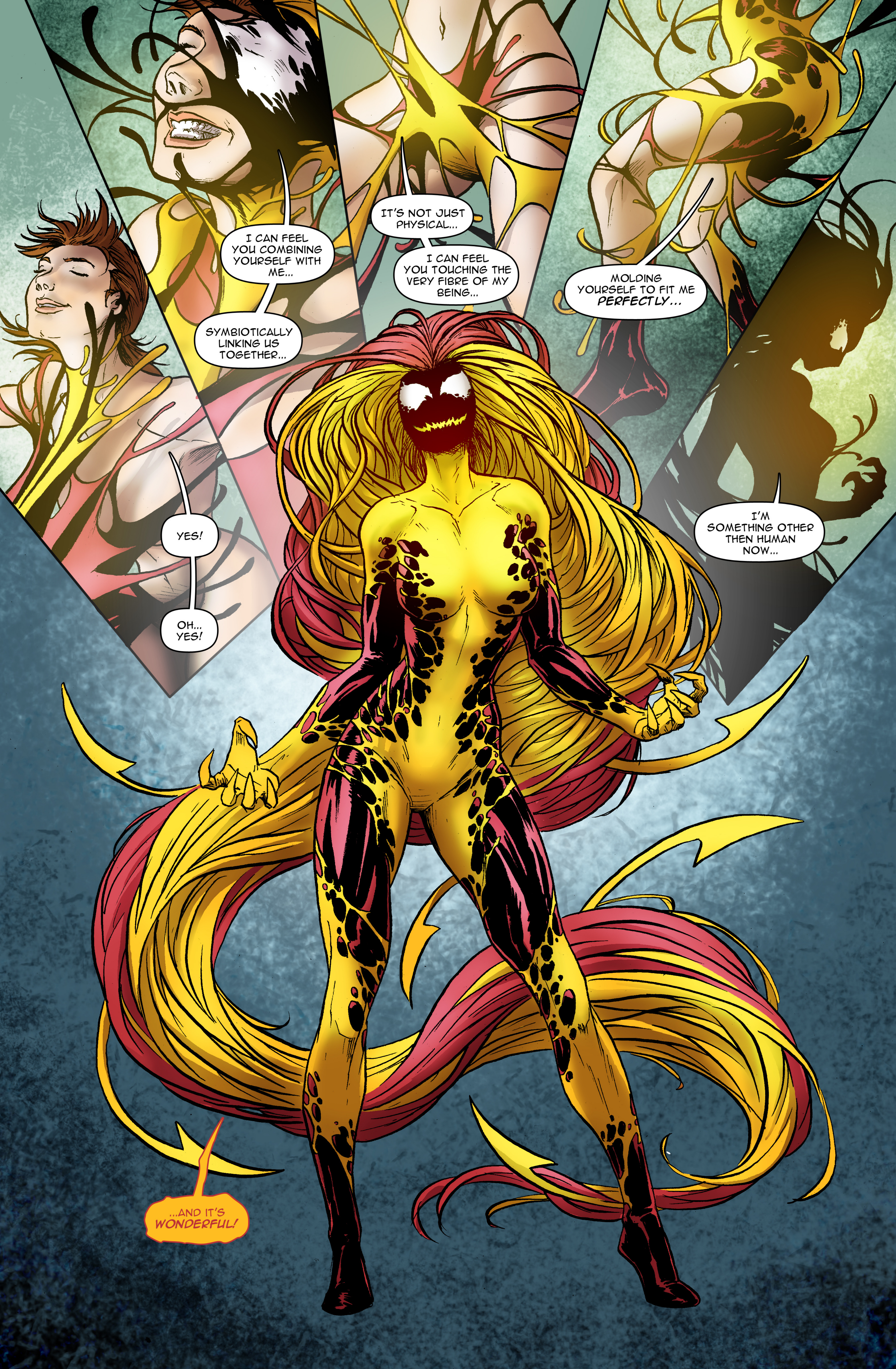

MY GOODNESS!
MY GAMBLE SEEMS TO BE PAYING OFF IN SPADES!
THE SYMBIOTE FEELS AMAZING ON MY HAND!
THE ACTUAL TRANSFORMATIVE NATURE OF WEARING IT IS OUTSTANDING!
IT'S ALREADY REGENERATED NEARLY 200% IT'S OWN MASS IN THE PAST MINUTE OR SO SINCE LINKING WITH MY HAND!
IT'S GOING TO LIVE!
I'D ... UMM...
BETTER NOT LET THE ALIEN LINGER TOO LONG.
I'VE GOT PLENTY OF DATA TO GO OVER NOW, AND IT'S RECOVERED...
MY JOB IS DONE.
THAT WAS INTENSE...
AND THE WAY IT LOOKED, SO UNLIKE ANY OF THE OTHER SPECIMENS THE FOUNDATION HAS PRODUCED.
I WONDER WHAT IT'D LOOK LIKE WHEN IT WAS FULLY LINKED TO A HOST...?
ALWAYS SO MANY QUESTIONS WITH THESE ALIENS WHEN THE ANSWERS ARE STARING US RIGHT IN THE FACE!
THEY'RE INTELLIGENT, SO WHY DON'T WE ASK WHAT THEY WOULD WANT FOR COOPERATION...
PLIP!
WAIT!
I JUST HEARD... IT SPEAK TO ME IN MY MIND?!
IT SAID IT WANTS...
ME?!

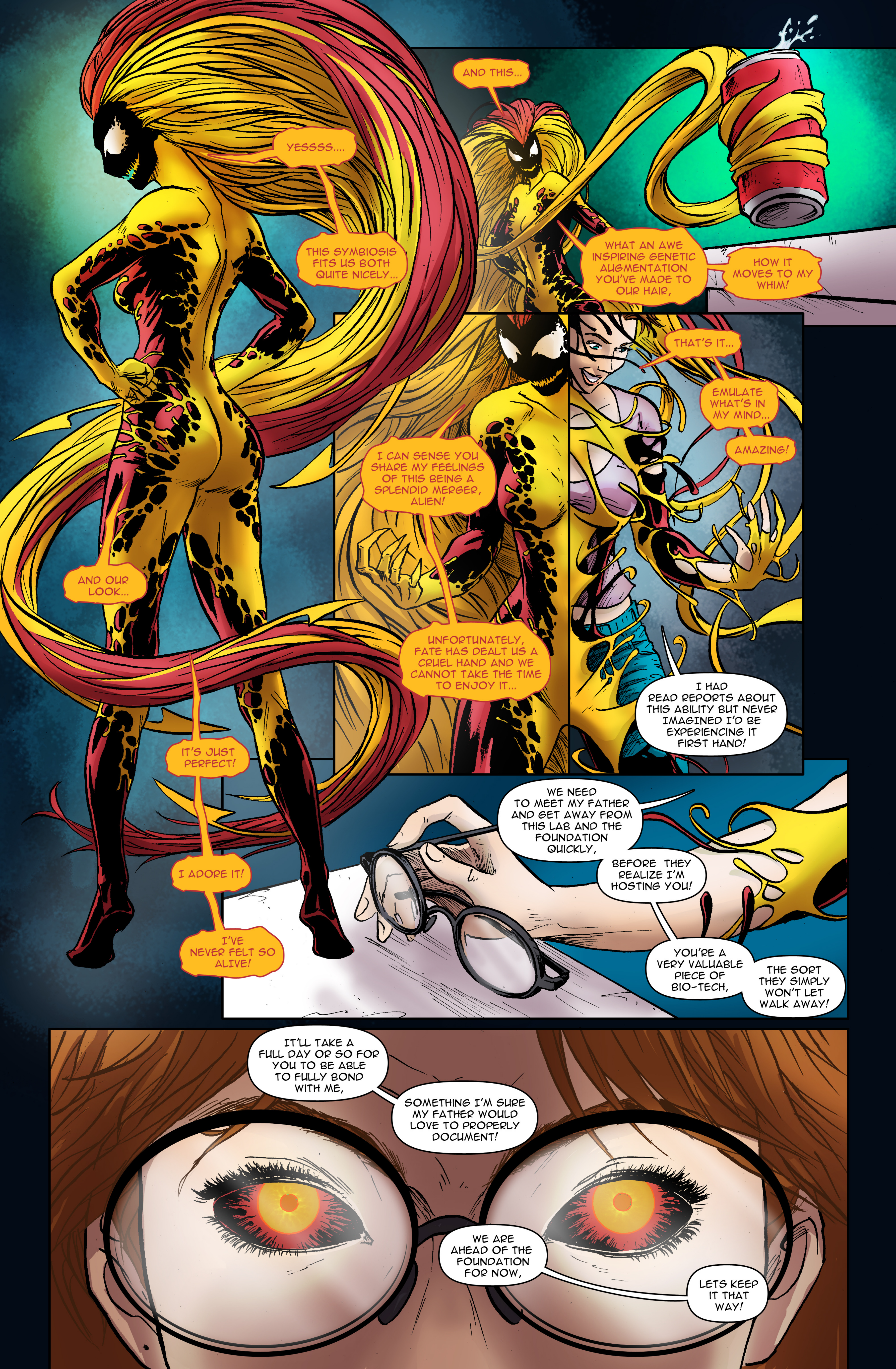

A FEW DAYS LATER...
SHOWER FEELS *SOOOO* NICE.
IT'S THE SIMPLE THINGS LIKE THIS THAT HELP ME FORGET I'M HALF A MILE UNDERGROUND IN A MOUNTAIN LAB STUDYING ALIEN LIFE FORMS.
WHAT I CAN'T FORGET IS THE WAY THE ALIEN PINGED MY MIND THE OTHER DAY.
IT SAID IT WANTED ME...
AND I THINK I KNOW WHAT IT MEANT...
I HAVEN'T BEEN BACK TO THE LAB IN DAYS.
I TOLD MY FATHER I WASN'T FEELING GREAT AND NEEDED SOME ALONE TIME,
AND THANKFULLY HE DIDN'T PRESS THE ISSUE.
I SHOULD TELL MY FATHER WHAT HAPPENED,
BUT HE'D ABSOLUTELY LOSE HIS MIND IF HE KNEW WHAT I DID.
NO, I MADE THIS DECISION MYSELF AND I HAVE TO FACE THE CONSEQUENCES MYSELF...
MY GOD...
IT SPOKE TO ME AGAIN!
SAID IT WANTS TO HELP ME!
AHH HEATHER, THERE YOU ARE.
FEELING GOOD ENOUGH TO GET BACK TO WORK FINALLY, EH?
YES, FATHER.
I FEEL MUCH BETTER NOW.
GUESS THE BUG I HAD HAS PASSED...
HEATHER... IS SOMETHING THE MATTER?
UMM, NO FATHER.
I'M JUST EXCITED TO GET BACK UNDERWAY...

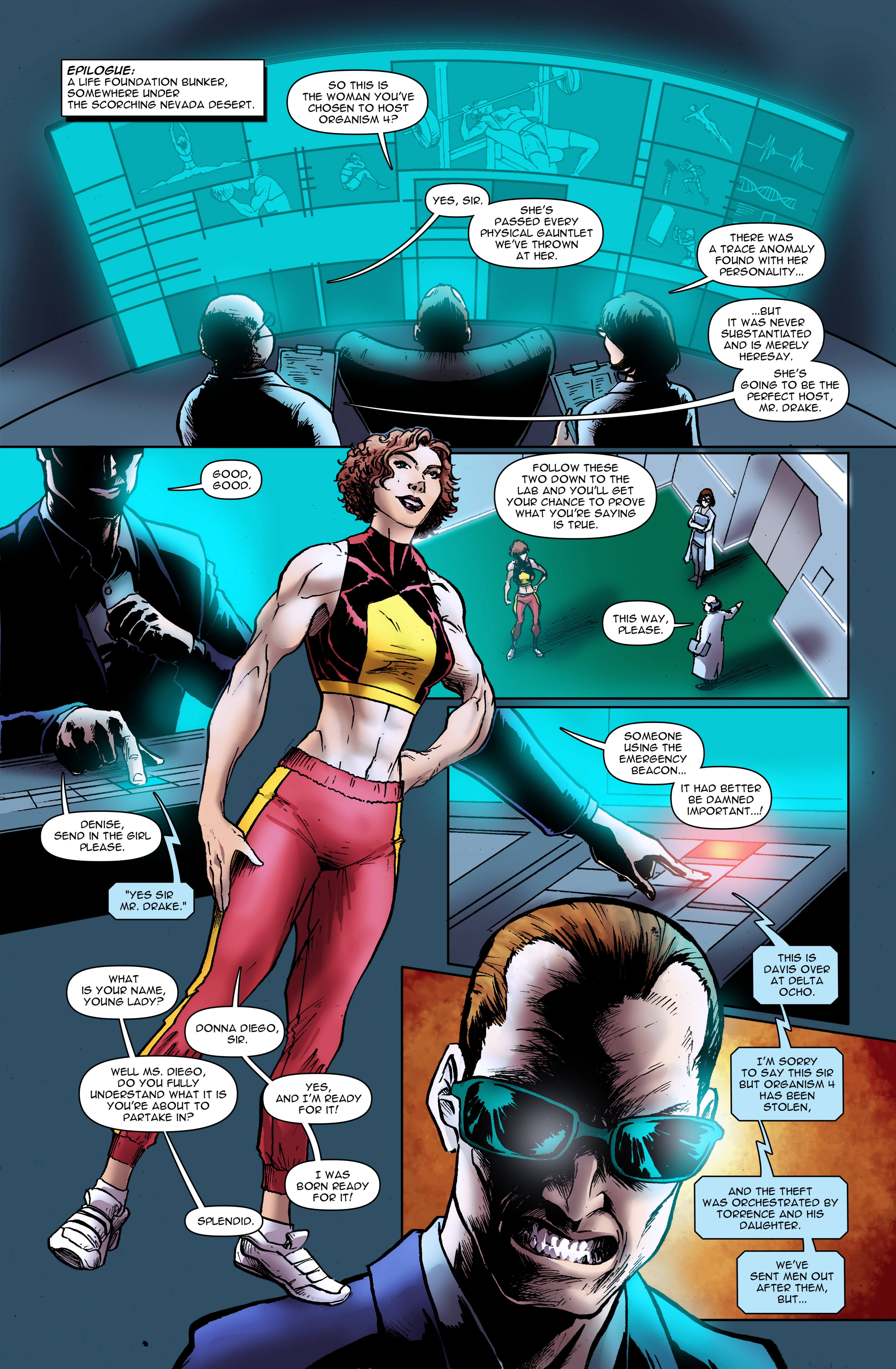

A FEW DAYS LATER...
WITH MY FATHER AWAY PRESENTING OUR FINDINGS TO THE FOUNDATION BIG-WIGS FOR THE NEXT FEW DAYS,
THIS IS MY BEST CHANCE TO TAKE THE ALIEN UP ON IT'S OFFER OF HELP.
DIRECT NEURAL SYMBIOSIS SHOULD YIELD FAR MORE DATA THEN A SIMPLE HAND LINKING EVER COULD,
AND IT SEEMS TO WANT TO COOPERATE.
TIMER IS SET FOR 10 SECONDS...
GOOD LORD...
JUST LIKE MY HAND...
ITS...
ITS...
AMAZING!!
SO MUCH WONDER...
KNOWLEDGE...
ALL MINE NOW...!
I UNDERSTAND NOW...
I CAN SEE EVERYTHING SO CLEARLY!


A FEW DAYS LATER, HEATHER'S FATHER RETURNS FROM THEIR EMPLOYER WITH CRIPPLING NEWS.
WHAT DO YOU MEAN THEY'VE ELECTED TO CONTINUE WITH THE GUARDIAN PROGRAM?!
SO THAT WONDROUS ONE OF A KIND ALIEN ENTITY IN THERE...
...IS GOING TO BE JOINED WITH A VOLUNTEER OF THE FOUNDATION'S CHOOSING TO THEN SERVE AS A SUPER POWERED POLICE FORCE.
EFFECTIVE TWO DAYS FROM NOW.
OUR HANDS ON IS AT AN END, HEATHER.
THE DATA WE'VE GOT TO COMB THROUGH IS EASILY YEARS WORTH OF VALUABLE RESEARCH.
I'M AS UPSET AS YOU ARE BUT WE KNEW THIS COULD HAPPEN...
AS UPSET AS I AM...
I'M NOT SO SURE ABOUT THAT FATHER...!
MY FATHER IS RIGHT OF COURSE...
WE'VE KNOWN THEY COULD HAVE PULLED THE PLUG LIKE THIS AT ANY POINT.
BUT I CAN'T LET THE ALIEN JUST BE CARTED OFF!
NOT AFTER THE OTHER NIGHT,
NOT AFTER MY MIND MELDING WITH IT!
WE SHARED A CONNECTION,
ONE I STILL FEEL NOW!
I CAN'T...
I WON'T LET IT END LIKE THIS!
WITH THE WORK I'VE PUT IN STUDYING AND COMMUNICATING WITH IT,
I SHOULD BE THE ONE WHO HOSTS IT FULLY FIRST!
AND... I WILL BE!
A FEW HOURS LATER...
GOOD,
THEY STILL HAVEN'T UPGRADED THE ALIEN'S SECURITY YET FOR TRANSPORT!
IT KNOWS WHY I'M HERE...
AND IT WANTS THIS JUST AS MUCH AS ME...


JUST AS I EXPECTED,
YOU WERE PLANNING ON FULLY HOSTING THE ALIEN ORGANISM.
F..FFF... FATHER?!
YOU REALLY THOUGHT SO LITTLE OF ME THAT YOU DIDN'T THINK I'D NOTICE THE ALIEN'S RAPID RECUPERATION?
I SUSPECTED YOU HAD GONE DOWN THE RECKLESS PATH OF SUBJECTING YOURSELF TO IT,
AND NOW THIS LITTLE STUNT CONFIRMS THOSE SUSPICIONS.
WELL...
I FELT MY HAND WAS FORCED!
WITH HOW HARD WE WORKED...
WHILE I DON'T AGREE WITH YOUR METHODOLOGY,
I DO AGREE WITH THE IDEA OF US CONTINUING TO BE THE ALIEN'S SCIENTIFIC STEWARDS GOING FORWARD.
MY LIFE'S WORK IS NOW GOING TO BE TIED UP WITH THAT ORGANISM,
AND I CANNOT THINK OF A BETTER WAY OF SMUGGLING IT OUT OF THIS COMPLEX THEN YOU HOSTING IT.
IN OTHER WORDS...
I'VE ALREADY PACKED OUR ESSENTIALS IN ANTICIPATION OF THIS OCCURRING.
ONCE YOU'RE FINISHED HERE HAVE THE ALIEN ASSUME THE FORM OF SOMETHING INCONSPICUOUS AND MEET ME AT AIRLOCK 4.
YES, FATHER...
AND ...
THANK YOU...
DON'T THANK ME JUST YET.
WHEN YOU SEE THE LITANY OF TESTS I'M PLANNING ON RUNNING ON YOU AND THE ALIEN ONCE YOU'RE HOSTING IT YOU MAY NOT BE SO EAGER TO GO DOWN THIS PATH.
NOW THAT IS SETTLED...
LET'S CONTINUE WHERE WE LEFT OFF, HMM?


I CAN FEEL YOU COMBINING YOURSELF WITH ME...
SYMBIOTICALLY LINKING US TOGETHER...
YES!
OH... YES!
IT'S NOT JUST PHYSICAL...
I CAN FEEL YOU TOUCHING THE VERY FIBRE OF MY BEING...
MOLDING YOURSELF TO FIT ME *PERFECTLY*...
I'M SOMETHING OTHER THEN HUMAN NOW...
...AND IT'S *WONDERFUL!*


YESSSS....
THIS SYMBIOSIS FITS US BOTH QUITE NICELY...
AND OUR LOOK...
IT'S JUST PERFECT!
I ADORE IT!
I'VE NEVER FELT SO ALIVE!
AND THIS...
WHAT AN AWE INSPIRING GENETIC AUGMENTATION YOU'VE MADE TO OUR HAIR,
HOW IT MOVES TO MY WHIM!
I CAN SENSE YOU SHARE MY FEELINGS OF THIS BEING A SPLENDID MERGER, ALIEN!
UNFORTUNATELY, FATE HAS DEALT US A CRUEL HAND AND WE CANNOT TAKE THE TIME TO ENJOY IT...
THAT'S IT...
EMULATE WHAT'S IN MY MIND...
AMAZING!
I HAD READ REPORTS ABOUT THIS ABILITY BUT NEVER IMAGINED I'D BE EXPERIENCING IT FIRST HAND!
WE NEED TO MEET MY FATHER AND GET AWAY FROM THIS LAB AND THE FOUNDATION QUICKLY,
BEFORE THEY REALIZE I'M HOSTING YOU!
YOU'RE A VERY VALUABLE PIECE OF BIO-TECH,
THE SORT THEY SIMPLY WON'T LET WALK AWAY!
IT'LL TAKE A FULL DAY OR SO FOR YOU TO BE ABLE TO FULLY BOND WITH ME,
SOMETHING I'M SURE MY FATHER WOULD LOVE TO PROPERLY DOCUMENT!
WE ARE AHEAD OF THE FOUNDATION FOR NOW,
LETS KEEP IT THAT WAY!


EPILOGUE:
A LIFE FOUNDATION BUNKER, SOMEWHERE UNDER THE SCORCHING NEVADA DESERT.
SO THIS IS THE WOMAN YOU'VE CHOSEN TO HOST ORGANISM 4?
YES, SIR.
SHE'S PASSED EVERY PHYSICAL GAUNTLET WE'VE THROWN AT HER.
THERE WAS A TRACE ANOMALY FOUND WITH HER PERSONALITY...
...BUT IT WAS NEVER SUBSTANTIATED AND IS MERELY HERESAY.
SHE'S GOING TO BE THE PERFECT HOST, MR. DRAKE.
GOOD, GOOD.
DENISE, SEND IN THE GIRL PLEASE.
"YES SIR MR. DRAKE."
FOLLOW THESE TWO DOWN TO THE LAB AND YOU'LL GET YOUR CHANCE TO PROVE WHAT YOU'RE SAYING IS TRUE.
THIS WAY, PLEASE.
WHAT IS YOUR NAME, YOUNG LADY?
DONNA DIEGO, SIR.
WELL MS. DIEGO, DO YOU FULLY UNDERSTAND WHAT IT IS YOU'RE ABOUT TO PARTAKE IN?
YES, AND I'M READY FOR IT!
I WAS BORN READY FOR IT!
SPLENDID.
SOMEONE USING THE EMERGENCY BEACON...
IT HAD BETTER BE DAMNED IMPORTANT...!
THIS IS DAVIS OVER AT DELTA OCHO.
I'M SORRY TO SAY THIS SIR BUT ORGANISM 4 HAS BEEN STOLEN,
AND THE THEFT WAS ORCHESTRATED BY TORRENCE AND HIS DAUGHTER.
WE'VE SENT MEN OUT AFTER THEM, BUT...